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23 July 1956

Memorandum for Record

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SUBJECT: Conversation with [REDACTED]

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1. [REDACTED] gave me some information about his trip to Mexico. He said that Mrs. Trotsky's interview, which was broadcast on Radio Liberation, was not obtained by him but by another representative of the Committee. [REDACTED] was able to interest Mrs. Trotsky in publishing a couple of articles [REDACTED] and is going to New York this week to see whether he can make a firm arrangement. He described Mrs. Trotsky as being in excellent mental and physical health. He does not think she is a political figure as far as her husband's career is concerned. He believes it should be possible for her to come to this country on a visitor's visa, especially if the projected articles are published in LIFE.

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2. [REDACTED] attempted to get in touch with Jean Menard, Trotsky's assassin, who is on the 16th year of a 20-year sentence in a Mexican penitentiary. Menard answered him briefly in a note, saying [REDACTED] did not think he could see him now but might be willing to do so later. [REDACTED] conjectures that Menard is concerned with what will happen to him after he is released. He may have to fear vengeance from the Soviets. [REDACTED] may wish to go back to France, where his mother is still living. [REDACTED] feels sure that Menard would have an interesting story to tell if he were willing.

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3. In regard to [REDACTED] own book, he is continuing to attempt to rebut his critics. He says that he now has a great deal of new material including much which does not bear directly on the document described in his book, consequently he expects to write another book. He still feels that some play should be given to his "revelations" through translations abroad. He told me that he had received two or three notes from Mr. Allen Dulles bearing on his, [REDACTED]. He quoted Mr. Dulles as saying that he found it "amusing".

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4. I discussed in general terms the idea of an annotated study of the Khrushchev speech and suggested he might be able to play some role in such an undertaking. [REDACTED] did not think that such a work would be news worthy in the sense that [REDACTED] one of the big magazines would be willing to publish it at this stage. However, he agreed that a fundamental detailed research effort would be worth while and suggested that this could best be carried out by the Russian Institute of the AMCOMLIB in Munich. He felt, however, that this would have to be undertaken with a good deal of firmness and careful supervision if it were not to degenerate into an aimless and ineffectual exercise.

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5. [REDACTED] expressed considerable concern over the failure of this Government to do anything effective about the Soviet redefection campaign. He said that it is commonly believed among those who know that at least 25,000 people would be repatriated to the Soviet Union by the end of next year. This will constitute a major victory for Soviet propaganda. He believes that the Soviets will treat these people well, at least for two or three years, while the campaign is still under way. They would have little to [REDACTED] maltreating them. As a propaganda countermeasure on our side, [REDACTED] said that he had suggested to AMCOMLIB the launching of a petition aiming at a million signatures. These would be refugees from the various parts of the Soviet Union, this country and abroad, who would state their willingness to return to the Soviet Union provided certain conditions were met. [REDACTED] did not spell out these conditions but indicated that they would obviously have to include freedom of expression, meeting, speech, etc. He believes that in fact the large majority of Russian emigres would be willing to return to their mother country if anything like sure guarantees were established along these lines. He stated that although his ideas were noted with some interest by AMCOMLIB, there had been no move to follow them up.

6. [REDACTED] is still convinced that new and perhaps even more sensational developments will take place on the Soviet front. He believes that there will be revelations and perhaps changes of personnel just as sensational as those which have already occurred. He also tends to believe that Tito and Nenni know a great deal more about the background of de-Stalinization than has ever been made public and that their "Tito-like" position at this stage is partly based on that. I indicated in general terms my feeling that Nenni may be preparing to make a break with Communism at this stage. [REDACTED] was inclined to agree and on his own, volunteered the suggestion that this could best be exploited on the American side by one of the Reuther brothers or by an intellectual of the stature and background of Ernest Hemingway.

7. [REDACTED] stated as a fact that documentary material comparable to that which he published in his book exists in this country. He has not, however, been able to find out in whose possession. He also said that some of the new material which has come to his attention not only confirms the thesis of the book but also that of Orlov's articles. He asked whether he and [REDACTED] could not combine somehow, since each case strengthens the other. [REDACTED] agreed that this might be desirable, but said that Orlov is very difficult and reluctant to involve himself with others.

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Chief, SRS/DDI

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